



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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City of Riverside Winner in National “StartUp in a Day” Competition

\$50,000 prize will digitize information, tell business owners more quickly how property can be used

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside has been named a winner in the national “StartUp in a Day” competition from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), which encourages local governments to cut red tape that can slow business development.

Riverside, one of four cities in California to win funding, will use the \$50,000 to streamline the process business owners go through to determine how property within the city can be used. Similar prizes were awarded to 24 other cities and two Native American tribes across the U.S.

“This is an exciting step forward for the City of Riverside and for entrepreneurs who know that time equals money when getting a business off the ground,” said Interim Economic Development Manager Greg Lee. “Providing quicker and more helpful information to people starting businesses is a central tenet of the Business Ready Riverside 2.0 plan, as well as the Business First program, and this award will further those goals. We also look forward to leveraging this opportunity to look at additional tools that will aid our entrepreneurs and small businesses through the permitting process.”

Riverside’s Office of Economic Development will use the funds to work with information technology and planning experts within the City to digitize the permitted use table, which explains how property can be utilized. The existing permitted use table is a static, 30-page PDF that cannot be searched electronically, making it potentially cumbersome for business owners.

A digital and searchable permitted use table will enable anyone starting a business to get a quicker and much more complete answer about how property can be used, appropriate zones for the property and any special conditions attached to the land. Tying the digitalized permitted use table to geographic information system software will allow users to obtain zoning, land use and other information as well.

“The City of Riverside encourages innovation and entrepreneurship, both within its own ranks at City Hall and with our partners in the business community,” Mayor Rusty Bailey said. “The work that will be funded by this award will help remove obstacles that keep business owners from opening their doors faster, which will enable them to get their goods and services to market quicker than ever.”

Startup in a Day is an initiative announced by President Obama earlier this year to help cities and Native American communities streamline the licensing, permitting, and other requirements needed to start a business in their areas. As part of the competition, Riverside committed to the goal that an entrepreneur will be able to apply for everything needed to begin a business in one business day.

SBA created the competition to encourage cities to simplify the licensing process for entrepreneurs. Red tape is a major obstacles that entrepreneurs cite for why new business formation in the U.S. is experiencing a decades-long decline, with the U.S. ranking 46th -- down from 41st last year -- on ease of starting a business, according to the World Bank.

Other cities around California that won the same award include Long Beach, Oakland and San Francisco. Los Angeles won the “Dream Big” prize of \$250,000 to create an open source solution that will be replicable and scalable on a broad basis.

Information about Riverside’s Office of Economic Development can be found at www.riversideoed.com

More information is available at www.sba.gov/startup or by e-mail at startup@sba.gov .